



Sermon Transcription • Abbotsford

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Six Characteristics of False Teachers - (Jude 5-13)

[Please Note: This transcript has been lightly edited for ease of reading. Also, some headings have been added in square brackets to aid the reader in locating portions of the sermon.]

Do you know how I usually start these sermons with a some stupid illustration of some sort of something. It's actually on purpose, part of the reason I do that is because I'm trying to build a bridge to you, because you are, in your mind, on the other side of the water, and I want you on this side of the water. So I'm trying to build a bridge so that you can leave behind the argument in your car and the way your kids are acting and the fact it's sunny out, right, and enter into what we're going to talk about. I don't actually have time to do that, except for what I just did. [Laughter] So what I need you to do, is I need to you to kind of engage quickly. I have six points which will scare everybody a lot. I have six points, the book of Jude is about false teaching and in this passage, Jude 5-13, he's going to give you six characteristics of false teachers, alright? They're false teachers that he's dealing with in his context but I have tried to identify the principles behind what he's saying about the false teachers he's dealing with regarding the way false teachers generally act in all ages. I think that there are some very key things that he says here, alright.

[False Teachers Abandon God's Word and God's Ways]

So, six of them, here's number one. False teachers abandon God's word and God's ways. False teachers abandon God's word and God's ways, in fact that's probably the key thing that we would say about false teachers, is that they are false because they're turning away from God's Word and turning away from the ways that God would have us live. Those are tied together most of the time right. The way people act is rooted in the doctrine they have of God. In fact I would probably argue that all of our problems are at the root theological, okay. That our viewpoints about God play themselves out in certain actions. So even with the false teachers you can find out what false teachers doctrine's is like by the way that they're living in light of that doctrine. But both of those tied together are the problem. The way that they handle God's Word and the way that they act regarding God's way. So Jude 5-7,

“Though you already know all this, I want to remind you that the Lord at one time delivered his people out of Egypt, but later destroyed those who did not believe. And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their proper dwelling—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day. In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.”



So if you and I were going to imagine for a minute that this large group of people were just a small group of people and we're having a little Bible study together and you've been part of a small group or Bible study or community group, and we're sitting in your living. I'm on the chair and you're on the couch and you're holding your tea or coffee and I'm leading a discussion. Here's the question, the Bible study question that I want to ask at this moment okay. What do the three stories that he just pointed out have in common? So I want to walk through each one of them, at the end you're going to be thinking, "So why does Jude put these three stories together? What is his *main* point regarding these three stories and why is he using them to talk about false teachers?"

So here's the first story, you noticed the three, the first one was about the Lord destroying Israel after saving them from Egypt. You probably remember the story, a lot of people even if you're not part of the church you might know the story about the people of Israel being delivered from Egypt and you know, going to the promised land. God came to Moses, said I want you to be the deliverer for my people whose cries I have heard because they're under bondage to the Egyptians which at that time was the largest military, most prosperous nation in the world, right. So they're king, their pharaoh, was as strong as anyone on the planet. In fact he called himself a god. He responded to Moses when Moses came to say to Pharaoh, "God, Yahweh, the one true God says, 'Let my people go.'" He said, "Who's this God that I should obey him?" So Yahweh is like, "Okay so we're gonna have a fight. It's gonna go 10 rounds, at some point in the fight you're gonna wanna back down," he said to Pharaoh, "But I'm going to prop you up and at the end you're gonna see that I am, in fact, the one true God, the greatest king in all the world, not you, Pharaoh." And that's what happens, the last plague is the one of the first born where the Passover happens and they have to paint the blood of a lamb on the doorposts of the homes. And they are set free, the people of Israel, and they go towards the Red Sea which is an immovable object, right, the sea doesn't move and behind them Pharaoh changes his mind, he's like, "You know what we're going to lose our entire workforce, this is not going to go well for economy so let's go get em." So they are between a proverbial rock and a hard place, right? Or in this case, a sea and a maniac dictator. And Israel's like, "Well thanks Moses for bringing us out here but we could've stayed back there, lived even under oppression we would have been alive. But our here we're going to die! What do we do?" Moses goes to God and says, "What do we do?" And the Lord says, "Just take that staff and raise it above your head and you'll see the deliverance of the people." And so the sea opens up in front of them and they walk through on dry ground, they turn around. Pharaoh and his army's are like, "We're going to chase after!" They get in the middle of the sea, the sea closes up and so Yahweh, the one true God, is able to defeat the strongest, rival to the throne, without firing a shot. People of Israel sing a song, as you would, you're thrilled about this deliverance, "We've been saved!"

You get to cross the wilderness for awhile, you go to the edge of the promised land and there are 12 spies who are sent into the promised land. Some of you grew up in Sunday school, remember there was a song about this right. <starts singing> Twelve meant to spy in Canaan, 10 were bad and 2 were good, yeah! <stops singing> [Laughter] Okay, no, some of you don't know that song, you should be happy we don't do it anymore, right? 10 of the spies come out and say, "Ah the people are way too big, stronger than us, smarter than us, there's just no way." It's just funny actually if you think about it, because they just came across the Red Sea where the strongest guy on the planet was buried without a shot being fired. "But they're big and strong and have muscles! So God can't do it!" Joshua and



Caleb, the two spies who came back who were faithful were like, “That’s crazy, I mean Red Sea, come on, if God says it we can do.” Well the people listened to the 10 and not the 2 and so the Lord responds in Numbers 14: 26-30,

“The Lord said to Moses and Aaron: ‘How long will this wicked community grumble against me?’ [Cause they are complaining again, ‘Oh Egypt was better than this.’] I have heard the complaints of these grumbling Israelites. So tell them, ‘As surely as I live,’ declares the Lord, ‘I will do to you the very thing I heard you say: [They were complaining about how their bodies were gonna fall in the dessert. He says, ‘Okay, that’s right your bodies are going fall in the desert.’] In this wilderness your bodies will fall—every one of you twenty years old or more who was counted in the census and who has grumbled against me. *Not one of you* will enter the land I swore with uplifted hand to make your home, except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun.’”

So they’re faithless. Now listen, Jude is pointing this out because he’s saying, “Look, here’s a group of people who were saved, delivered from their oppression through the Red Sea in fact, other Biblical writers say that they’re baptized into Moses, they’ve had a rich past history with God. And yet later on they turned away from him and were destroyed. So even if you begin with God with great fanfare and excitement if it at one point you decide to unrepentantly turn away from him what’s the result going to be?

So that’s the first picture in Egypt and Israel, the second picture is this angels abandoning their proper dwelling. Did you see that in Jude there? What about the angels who abandon their proper dwelling. What? Where is that from? Genesis 6, just before the flood, Genesis 6:1-4,

“When human beings began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, the sons of God [Who are they? So that’s the question that should be in your mind at this present moment. Who are the sons of God? There’s a big theological debate about this. The sons of God] saw that the daughters of humans were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose. Then the Lord said, ‘My Spirit will not contend with humans forever, for they are mortal; their days will be a hundred and twenty years.’ The Nephilim [now were the children of the union between the sons of God and the daughters of humans, the Nephilim] were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went to the daughters of humans and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown.”

Great super heros of the ancient world where the Nephilim because they were really big and they were the progeny, the children, of the sons of God with the daughters of humans. So who are the sons of God? So this is a debate here, some people say, “Ah that’s just another name for guys, for dudes.” Alright, sons of God, of course it’s not like something you’d write down about, “Hey let me tell you this crazy story, where *men* married *women*.” [Laughter] Their children were huge, so this has led a lot of commentators to say, “Okay, the sons of God sound like angels.” Now in Jewish history the Jews actually believed that that’s exactly what this was written about and so we have extra statements and extra works in Jewish history, Jewish traditional books that actually tell stories about this, kind of like the



behind the scenes, “Hey you guys know what happened in Genesis 6? Let us tell you what happened in heaven to lead to that.” So in a book called 1 Enoch, man aren’t you excited you came to church today, 1 Enoch, okay? 1 Enoch 6:1-5 Jewish apocryphal book. Here’s what it says,

“And it came to pass, when children of men had multiplied, that beautiful daughters were born to men. And the Angels, the children of Heaven, saw and lusted after them. And they said to one another: ‘Come, let us choose us wives, from the children of men, and have children.’ And Semyaza, who was their leader, said to them: ‘I fear you [guys won’t] agree to do this deed and I alone will have to pay the penalty of a great sin. [You guys are going to turn away, we’re going to get to the edge of this whole thing and you’re all gonna ditch me and I’m going be standing there in the middle of everything being, you know, judged all by myself for the sin.]’ And they all answered him, and said: ‘Let us all swear an oath, and bind ourselves by mutual promise, not to abandon this plan, but to do this thing.’ Then they all swore together and bound themselves by mutual promise to do it.”

So what is he referring to, the angels leaving their proper dwelling, Jude is saying, “You know the story, 1 Enoch,” a book in fact, that he quotes lots of times in his letter. “You know the story from 1 Enoch, which is the behind the scenes of what happens in Genesis 6, that’s what I’m talking about. These angels who should have listened to God’s word, abandoned God, came to earth, had children and the result was God’s judgement and the flood.” So even if you’re an angel, a high and mighty one, and you abandon God’s ways, the result will be judgement.

So third story now, okay? So Israel in Egypt, the angels leaving their dwelling, the third one is Sodom and Gomorrah giving themselves up to sexual immorality. If you’ve been here at the church for the last while we went through this story a little bit and we did this series on Abraham, ah it’s a crazy story in the Bible, it’s one of those ones you’re like, “What’s going on?” as if the other two aren’t crazy enough. Okay, so, God comes to some angels, he sends them down to Abraham and they say to Abraham, “Look, we’ve come here to go and deliver Lot from Sodom.” And they do, they go into Sodom and when they arrive in Sodom they knock on his door [knocking], he apparently is the only righteous person in the entire city. This is why the Lord has sent him, he’s going to burn the city with fire, get Lot out. So rescue mission, two angels, knock on his door. Lot opens it, “Hey guys, ah, can you just come in here right away, right away!” Angels are like, “No we’re here to deliver you.” “No, come in here right away, right away, come, come, come, come!” Pulls them inside, shuts the door and soon as he shuts the door, on the door, [pounding sound] “Hey Lot, this is the men of Sodom here we just want to let you know we saw the two guys you brought in, and we’re here to rape them.” Now that’s the story, Lot in his *craziness* at this moment, “Well you can’t have them but I’ve got a couple daughters,” which is a sign of his crazy capitulation to his culture but what you’re supposed to get from that idea, the city Sodom is a pretty reckless place. And God in the end judges, and gets Lot and his family out, but he judges it with fire from heaven. So what are we supposed to learn? Well we’re supposed to learn according to Jude that *they* serve as an example, Sodom and Gomorrah serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire. So you guys see what happened to Sodom



and Gomorrah because of their wicked sinful actions, rooted in their denial of God? It's a sign of what's to come if you keep going.

So there's your three stories. What's to learn? Here's my go at an answer, I think they're saying that abandoning God's word so that you live in persistently in unrepentantly immoral ways will incur God's judgement regardless of your past experiences or standing. I'll read that again okay. Abandoning God's word so that you live in persistently and unrepentantly immoral ways will incur God's judgement, *regardless* of your past experiences or standing. "Oh but I had this great experience with God and I came to faith in Jesus." Great! So did Israel. "Oh but you don't know man, I've had like *angelic* experiences." Right, the ones who left their proper dwelling and were judged, ah. God is not going to sit by and watch you turn away from him in unbelief even though you have great claims to things, you turn away from unbelief and you persist in that unbelief and he's going to just stand by and go, "Hey it's cool, you do you." You do know there are people in churches today who are teaching that very thing. They are saying essentially that you know what especially when as it pertains to sexual immorality, you know God's not really bothered by it guys. We're the ones that are freaking out about sex in the church these days. God's not bothered by it, in fact all the people who the church claims in their ignorance and hate filled language and intolerance all those people are going to stand before God one day and what they're going to hear from God a voice of assurance and a pat on the back and say, "Man, I'm just glad you did you. That was my goal all along, for you just to embrace who you are." And yet passages like this are essentially saying, "No actually if you believe that you should read what God has already written and done. They're signs already gone by about the kind of people who've done those sorts of things and what's been their end."

[False Teachers Justify Their Actions by Their Dreams]

So false teachers abandon God's word and ways, that's the first point. That's only one, here we go, number two, false teachers justify their actions *by* their dreams. Jude 8,

"In the very same way, on the strength of their *dreams* these ungodly people pollute their own bodies, reject authority and heap abuse on celestial beings."

I'd a friend when I was in high school, started dating this girl. Dated her all the way through high school and into college years. And he was *convinced* that this was the one for him. She wasn't so convinced, in fact on the one evening she told him, "I am having serious doubts about our relationship," she listed the reasons why, and she said, "We need to go and pray about this, cause seriously I just don't think this is going to happen." In tears he went home that night, fell asleep and he woke up the next morning and called me at like seven in the morning and he said, "Jeff I have to tell you an experience I had last night."

"Okay"

"Well girlfriend said basically we're done and I went home and I had a dream." "About what?" I said.

"God came to me." I said, "What did he look like?" He said, "Really big, okay, really big."

"Okay, what did God say?"



“Well when he came to me, he said to me, ‘I want you to marry her and inform her that it is my will that she marry you.’ So he said to me, ‘I honestly feel, I woke up this morning with this burden because I have the word of the Lord to share with her.’ And I said, ‘Yeah good luck with that, right?’ Anyway he did, he shared in the middle of the day, that day, now ladies how would you respond to the guy who says to you these words in this moment. [Laughter] Well that’s how she responded, ‘Ahhh if God’s got something to say, I’m right here. Do you know what I mean? I have dreams too and I didn’t have any of that.’ So she married another guy, that’s a story for another day, he showed up at the wedding, but I’ll tell you that one another time right? He showed up at the wedding it was awkward, totally right? Anyway the point is what he’s essentially doing there he’s saying, ‘Look the authority that I have to tell you ‘Thus saith the Lord’ is not the revealed Word of God, it’s what I dreamt. It’s the vision I have, and if you want to obey you’ll obey the dream.’”

If we could do a church history lesson at this point and I could show that through the history of the church, most false teachers when confronted on the authority they have for what they’re teaching that counters what God has revealed in his Word, they appeal to the dream, they appeal to a vision. Joseph Smith, this is essentially what his argument was, Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism. He spent 10 years receiving supposedly visions and dreams saying that the church had abandoned its way and in order for it to be renewed back to its original intent you have to go find these golden plates. He was led by an angel in a dream, supposedly, to unearth these plates in upstate New York, and that’s the book of Mormon. An entire religion in the world today that is based upon the dream that this man had. The Koran largely is similar situation, Muhammed up in the hills receiving a dream from Allah where he received the revelation that’s in the Koran. It happens in the church, *all the time* guys.

One of the most famous ones was in 1977, Oral Roberts, he wanted to build this building, called the city of Faith. I have a picture of it, it actually did get built in the end. It was one of the largest buildings in Tulsa Oklahoma, about 60 stories high, 600 feet high. They didn’t have enough money to do it, his ministry didn’t have enough to do it. So in order to get that money he had a dream he reported in a fundraising letter. Here’s what he said in that fundraising letter,

“I’ve felt an overwhelming holy presence all around me, [describing his dream that he had, I felt an overwhelming holy presence all around me] When I opened my eyes there he stood... some 900 feet tall looking at me, his eyes, oh his eyes [talking about Jesus] he stood a full 300 feet taller than the 600 foot tall City of Faith... I’ve only seen Jesus once before [he said] but here I was face to face to the King of Kings. He stared at me without saying a word, he reached down, put his hands under the City of Faith, lifted it and said to me, ‘See how easy it is for me to lift it.’ Robert’s said that Jesus assured him that through the financial support of ministry partners the City of Faith would be finished. [This comes from an article that was written in 1980 about this whole scene.] Roberts told his partners that they can ‘help by stopping first and praying for me write now and then by listening in your heart to what Jesus is speaking inside of you about obedience, next by giving, [all caps now,] PRECIOUS SEED, this week to help me pay the bills in September for the first of the big equipment that is now arriving.’ Roberts in the letter reminded his supporters that they would do well to obey Christ. ‘If you will obey,’ Roberts wrote, ‘it will not be difficult to finish the second half of the City of Faith.’”



Did it work? Well there it is. 10 years later this building was, in fact the ministry was almost bankrupt and they needed four and a half million dollars and so Roberts came along and said, “Look, ah I got another vision from God, in fact Jesus visited me another time, and this time he told me that if I don’t raise four and a half million dollars by this particular date he’s going to kill me.” Do you think it worked? You bet it did, six million or so later, but why should you do it? Because of the dream. Because of any kind of authority given to the apostles passed down in the scriptures but because I had a vision, I had a dream and you are responsible now to obey the Word of the Lord given to me the leader. This is what false teachers do, they rely heavily on dreams. Listen I’m not bashing dreams or visions, God can do that all the time. But when he gives them they will always line up with what he’s teaching in his Word. That’s the way they play it though.

[False Teachers Arrogantly Overestimate Their Authority]

False teachers, third, arrogantly overestimate their authority. They arrogantly overestimate their authority. Look at Jude 9-10,

“But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not himself dare to condemn him for slander but said, ‘The Lord rebuke you!’ Yet these people slander whatever they do not understand, and the very things they do understand by instinct—as irrational animals do—will destroy them.”

Okay this little story about the dispute between the devil and the archangel Michael is not one that’s found in the Bible. It is one that’s very obscure in Jewish tradition, and that was apparently what happened is that when Moses died, the Devil shows up and he says I want the body. By saying this the Devil was saying I’m going to delay Moses from entering the afterlife, “So give me the body.” The messenger sent from God was the archangel Michael who stood over him, the body, and said, “No.” The devil started accusing God of all sorts of horrible things and ridiculous, the Devil, he’s the father of lies and he’s lying and slandering God and the archangel Michael, in this moment, does not have the audacity to say to the Devil, “Get out of here.” But instead says, “The Lord rebuke you.” Because he knew that the only authority that he had was given to him by God. He has no right in other words to stand in the place of God. He can only appeal and give testimony to the authority God has, cause he doesn’t have the authority, the archangel, that’s what he did when facing off against the devil. What Jude’s basically saying, “These false teachers act like they are God’s emissaries and they just wield power all over the place. They stand essentially, in the place of Jesus himself declaring that they’re anointing gives them the authority to do whatever.”

I got an email a couple of weeks, well more than a couple now, it was Palm Sunday, you guys know that, the week before Easter. It’s the week that the Christian church celebrates the, the entrance into Jerusalem of Jesus and he is being welcomed by the people as the the coming king. And the way that they showed that in those days, is they laid palm branches down in front of him as he entered the city on his donkey. Well the email that was sent to me was actually a picture and a little story from a friend of mine who is a pastor in Uganda, and in Uganda in the town where my friend lives, he said there’s a



pastor in town, very well known as a guy who teaches false doctrine. It's a huge church, very wealthy, he's getting rich off the backs of lots and lots of people. This guy came into the church on Palm Sunday down the main aisle of the church as the people in his church laid palm branches in front of him. There by putting himself into the shoes of Jesus happily. I make jokes, we usually have this prop during Easter sometimes where we put this, it's foam looks like a tomb, it's not real, and we put it on the stage here and in front of it is a circular stone. And I always make jokes every year that they want to use it, I always say one of these years i'm going to come out of that thing. I'm gonna roll that stone away and smoke's going to come out and go "Waaa, What's uuuup?" And of course people laugh, they're like, "Whatever." And that's right, whatever! Who in the world would have the audacity to act that way. Well false teachers do. They place the authority in their words and they're dreams, they say, "You don't need to look at Jesus, he's anointed me. Look at me! Look at my life! Look at all the things I do!" Arrogantly overestimate their authority.

[They are Doomed and They Lead Others to that Doom]

Number four, they are doomed and they lead others to that doom. They are doomed and they lead others to that doom. Jude 11,

"Woe to them! They have taken the way of Cain; they have rushed for profit into Balaam's error; they have been destroyed in Korah's rebellion."

The story about Cain is interesting, he just disregarded the Word of God, killed his brother Abel, and then was judged by God. But it's the other two that I'm really interested in, because there's a similarity between Balaam's error and Korah's rebellion. So here's what happened with Balaam's error. Most people who kind of around the church, they know the name Balaam because they are like, "Didn't a donkey talk to that guy at some point?" Yes, but let me give you the backstory to that. So the people of Israel are taking the promised land now. They've followed God's word after being in the desert for 40 years. They finally come, they've taken the promised land, and there's a Moabite king named Balak, who says, "Look." Actually I think it was prior to the promised land, I apologize for that. There's this Moabite king, Balak, who's like, "Okay the only way we're going to have victory over these people, the only way we're going to have victory over these people is if we can find some supernatural means to curse them because they're winning all the battles, right." So the Moabite king finds a prophet of God, his name's Balaam and he says, "Alright Balaam, here's some money," a little bag of money right in front of him and says, "Why don't you curse Israel for us, okay? So that way we'll win." Well that's a lot of money," says Balaam, "So let me go talk to Yahweh about this." So he goes off and he has a private conversation with the one true God and Yahweh says, "Are you nuts? Like, get out of here, stop it." So he goes back and he says to Balaak the king, "Look I can't do it, God won't let me, I can only speak the truth, he won't let me." "Okay fine that's fine," says Balaak, he leaves he comes back with some more, you know, well appointed stewards, some of the higher ups, the mucky mucks show up and this time they've got like the Brinks armoured truck and they open it up and they just start laying the money in front of him. And they say, "Could we maybe convince you to have another go at this?" And Balaam's like, "Ohhh that is a lot of money! Ummm, okay, just let me go talk to Yahweh again, and maybe I can convince him," so it's like this used car thing at this point. "Just hold on, I'll be right back." Right? Goes



behind the glass window and he's talking and God's like, "Okay fine, fine, if you want to do this Balaam if that's what's really in your heart, let's do this." So Balaam's like, "Hey cool, it's going to work." They end up going and half way there, he's riding a donkey, the donkey stops in his tracks, turns his head to Balaam and says, "Stop it, like seriously this stupid, stop it." So all this time Balaam can't judge them, he can not, he can't curse them in anyway. God won't let him do it. Jewish tradition now says that Balaam somewhere along the line here, shared a word with Balaak the king and said this, okay. "Um I can't curse them but here's one way you could beat them. Take all of the women in your, in your setting there, all the Moabite women. And I want you to dress them up in their prettiest garments and I want you to just put some smelly stuff on them and put them right in front of those men of Israel. And when they see them, they are going to be like, 'Oh please please.' And they are going to take those women into their homes and then after a little while they are going to have a little pillow talk with those ladies and those men who are going to be so excited about these women they're going to say to these women, 'I would like you to be my wife, I would like you to come be a part of my family, please, please be mine.'" Now God has told Israelite men that they're not to intermarry with the women of the land lest that they become idolaters and bow down to their idols. So in this moment, in this little pillow talk moment those women, after those men make that approach them, they can pull out their little idol and say, "Yeah I would love to be your wife, if you bow down to my little idol here." And those men will do it and when they do God will judge them. There's some references made in the Old Testament about that particular occasion so in the story of Balaam, what you've got is a guy who is given advice to a bunch of people that has led those people to destruction. His actions aren't just affecting him they're affecting everybody else!

Korah, same story, Korah is a leading a mutiny when they're at the edge of the promised land and the 10 were bad and 2 were good. Korah's like, you know what, we're sick of you Moses we don't need you around here anymore. I want to lead this charge, me and my 250 friends here are going to take over. Moses is like, "Fine we'll have a contest. Tomorrow morning you'll stand on one side and I'll stand on the other and we'll let the Lord'll decide." Now Moses goes back and says to the Lord, "What do you want me to do here?" And the Lord says to Moses, "Can you just get out of the way, I'm going to smite him now, I've got my gun aimed, just move aside and I'm going to pop him." And Moses is like, "You know tomorrow morning we're going have this thing." And the Lord says, "Alright. So tomorrow morning what I'm going to do, the earth's going to open up and swallow him, okay? And close back up over him." And Moses is like, the next morning he shows up and he says, "Okay so people of Israel, here's the thing, God's going to choose between me and Korah so to make this fair let's just say that if Korah lives the rest of his life and isn't harmed at all then he should be your leader. But if, I don't know, the earth opens up and swallows him, then I should be the leader, okay? That's what God's decided." And people are like well that's a pretty good test, let's sure, let's do that. The moment they finish saying the words the earth goes [whah], and closes up over Korah. And the 250 people who are with him, fire from heaven comes down and knocks them out. Now that's the point, is that in Balaam's error and in Korah's rebellion it was not just about the judgement on Balaam and Korah, it was about the those who followed. There are so many people who think that, "Oh if so and so follows a false teacher, the false teacher, yes they are going to incur judgement but the people who follow, God's got a special grace for them." NO! They're in *grave danger*.



[They Are Frustratingly Not What They Seem]

Number five, they are frustratingly not what they seem. Jude 12,

“These people are blemishes at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualm—shepherds who feed only themselves. They are clouds without rain, blown along by the wind; autumn trees, without fruit and uprooted—twice dead.”

I know it's really hard for us to access the idea that the coming clouds bring joy, okay. Rain clouds are things that you're like, “Oh I'm so excited.” That never happens here but in places like Palestine, and arid places like Arizona where they need to have the rain to fertilize the crops because they're dependent on them. When you see rain clouds on the horizon and they're coming towards you there's like this excitement that you get, “Oh it's going to rain, it's going to rain, I'm so excited, the rain!” You start to smell, my uncle's knee starts hurting, you're like, “It's gonna to rain.” and then what happens if nothing happens. You go through this rollercoaster of of great joy and promise to like devastation, NO!

Go to the Apple Barn during Autumn with the apples come out and you're like, “Oooh I like those apples they're not thrown in the chiller somewhere in Kelowna all year we're going to go and get the fresh ones off the tree. All right!” Go and jump on the bouncy thing and you're kids are there and, “Okay let's go get the, let's go get the apples off the trees.” Beautiful, half the trees, perfect time of the season, you've plotted it on your graph all year, this is the moment we're going to make this work. You show up at the apple tree with joy and there's nothing on them. “What's wrong?” you say to one of the employees. “Yeah it just didn't come in this year.”

“Yeah but they *look* like they should come in this year!”

“Yeah I know but they didn't.” Great joy followed by great frustration. That's what these false teachers are, they're shepherds who feed themselves. They look like the kind of people who should be providing for the sheep but all they're doing is getting fat on it themselves. They promised so much with what they're teaching, but it's a lie in the end. They tell you, “Oh come follow this particular way, follow this teaching and idea, it's going to solve your problem. God will bless you, you'll get more money, more joy, more, more, more.” And then you follow it, usually involving you giving money to them and you follow it and what happens? Well it doesn't work and you write them letters and say, “Well, what happened, tell me? What did I do wrong?”

“Ah well you didn't pray in faith or your didn't give enough money, maybe try it again.” So you try it again, and again, and again, and again. Rainless clouds. Shepherds who feed themselves are frustratingly not what they seem.

[They are Untrustworthy Guides]

Number six and finally, they were untrustworthy guides, Jude 13.



“They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shame; wandering stars, for whom blackest darkness has been reserved forever.”

You've ever played Marco Polo? Marco...okay, some of you have played it then. Yeah you know the game? Yeah my daughter and I when we get in the pool together we play Marco Polo, she always cheats, right? Cause the reason she cheats is because it's very frustrating to try and follow a moving target isn't it? Other sports don't do that. Can you imagine basketball, they just, it keeps moving, “Okay we are going to...no wait it's over there.” That's hard, in the ancient world what they did when they wanted to plot a course is they used the stars to guide them if they were in a sailboat or wanted to go out in the water somewhere. There's stars that way. So I want to head that way...the reason I can trust the stars is that they're not going to wander on me, but what if they did? What if your trusting something and it's moving? The target keeps moving. Well what happens is that you end up somewhere where you did not intend. You thought you were heading toward *that* destination and then surprise surprise when you arrive there it's not what you thought. Did you see where it is that these wandering stars lead you? Blackest darkness what do you think that refers to? Look everything's at stake here. Not just for the the false teacher but all who follow.

Look let me finish this whole thing by just pointing out one little phrase in Jude 12, he said, “These people are blemishes at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualm.” That word, love feasts, that's the way the early church used to gather together and they used to have a meal around their worship services. And he's basically saying you know when you guys gather together for worship and you have that meal together, sitting next to you are these blemishes. That word actually is the greek word, reef. They're like a reef just under the surface of the water. I know you can't see them there, but they're there. In your midst, right, right there. I used to do a lot of water skiing in my day, when I was young. I used to go out with a friend, Greg Crumm, you go out in the lake and you're water skiing like crazy you know boats going full bore, and you're like, “Yeah!!” Excited and all that sort of thing, there's a certain spot in the lake where we used to water ski where there was a sandbar that came out. Whenever we got near it everybody got in the boat, my job was to go to the front of the boat, lean over the front and just yell when I saw the bar coming. There's a big difference between your posture when there's no reefs in the water and when there are. When there's no reefs, you're just free and happy and everything's just fine, but when there're reefs in the water you are very inquisitive, very deliberate, very concerned. Shouldn't that be the way that we approach this stuff? Listen I'm just telling you that according to Jude, these are dangerous waters. This Christian setting that we're in, at our love feasts, at our worship services, on the radio, at the bookstore, there are reefs. Shouldn't your posture be one of concern and care and discernment. Ah maybe Jude says it better, Jude 3-4,

“I...urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people. For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you.”

Let me pray for us. Lord I'm thankful for your Word, I'm thankful for your grace in giving it to us. Warnings are not things Lord that we usually take well and yet they're wonderful warnings Father. I take great joy in the signs along the side of the road that warn me to be careful when we're going around a



bend or the warnings signs in the lake that says that they is a reef or a sandbar nearby, I pray Father that's how these sermons, this book would serve to this church. There're lots of Father who have assumed too much, too much trust in those who are teaching us and I pray Father that you would by the power of your Spirit inspire us to think better. We know Lord that you're going to carry us through these dangerous waters to safe harbour. We pray that it is done through the means of our care and consideration and discernment, would you make it so, in Jesus name, Amen.